

Father's Day 2020

Father's Day Encouragement (June 21st, 2020)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-2 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Ask the Father for unity this week as we remember that we are a body of people who have been adopted into His family by faith in what Jesus has done for us! Pray that this unity would unite us as a church to become an example of a loving community in these trying times. Praise the Father for creating us in His image, an image that shows us how to love because He eternally loves His Son through the Holy Spirit. Ask that we would learn how to love Him and others more deeply as we look to bring His kingdom to our community until Jesus returns!

Discussion: (45-60 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Mark Teyler helped us celebrate Father's Day. Pastor Mark takes a look at a key passage in *1 Thessalonians 2:11-12* in order to describe how a Father deals with his own children. Here, Pastor Mark shares how Father's encourage us when times are tough, comfort us when we find ourselves in times of trouble, and urge us to wrestle with the claims of the Bible! Finally, Pastor Mark challenges us to receive encouragement, comfort, and convictions from our heavenly Father in Jesus as we encourage, comfort, and urge others in the church and in our community!

“You can't go back and make a brand new start, but you can start today and make a brand new end” – John Maxwell (Christian Author)

Suggested Questions

Check-In: *Icebreaker* – Share one special memory you have with your Father / Father figure!

Study Tip: *Read 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12* - After Paul and Silas had experienced a great earthquake in a Philippian prison and converted a jailer in the process, they were released and asked to leave the city (Ac. 16:16-40). As they traveled east, their next major stop was the port city of Thessalonica. Situated on a gulf and next to a major Roman highway system, this commercial city with upwards of 200,000 people became known as the “key to the whole of Macedonia” in the Roman Empire. Here, Paul and Silas spent three Sabbaths in the synagogue convincing many Jews and Greeks of the Christian faith. However, other Jews became jealous, formed a mob, and attacked a man named Jason who had taken in Paul and Silas. The excuse; “*These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason received them, and they are all acting against the decree of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus*” (Ac. 17:1-10). Paul was chased out of Thessalonica as well as the neighboring city of Berea by this mob causing Paul to move on to Athens. However, Silas and Timothy stayed close in Berea (Ac.17:11-15). Later, Timothy would venture into Thessalonica (3:2) and would give a report to Paul about the church regarding their work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope (1:2-3). Like a Father, Paul faced down the mob so that he could **encourage** the Thessalonians towards *faith* in the true king, **comfort** them in *love*, and **urge** them to wrestle with the difficult claims of scripture that lead to *hope* (4:1-5:10). In this study guide, reflect on all the ways our Heavenly Father moves mountains to encourage our faith in Jesus, comforting us in His love, and urging us to meditate on His word of hope!

Objective #1: Identify areas where you can give and need to receive encouragement in your faith.

Primary Texts: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Timothy 4:16-18; Hebrews 3:7-13 – Pastor Mark cites these three scriptures as examples of Paul challenging the church to encourage one another towards belief in Jesus. In addition, Pastor Mark points out that Paul is able to receive encouragement in difficult seasons for himself from his Heavenly Father! What are some ways that you can use the spiritual gifts that God has given you to be an encouragement to another person’s faith? Considering our current circumstances, in which areas of faith could you use some encouragement from your Heavenly Father?

Objective #2: Describe God’s comfort in your life / how you can use your experience to love others

Primary Texts: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 – Next, Pastor Mark uses this text to show what it means for Paul to receive comfort from the Lord in times of trouble. Additionally, this text explains how the comfort we receive from our heavenly Father becomes the source of comfort that we can begin to distribute to others in love. In any of your past experiences, how would you describe God’s comfort? In what ways do you believe that your experience of God’s comfort could be used in someone else’s life today?

Objective #3: Find out how you can urge your group to stay in the Word of God!

Primary Texts: Ephesians 6:4, 10-20; 2 Timothy 3:10-17 – Finally, Pastor Mark shows us how Father’s urge their children toward training and instruction so that they might become better people. In this case, Paul urges the church to embrace the training and instruction of the Lord that comes from the “God-breathed” scriptures so that they may be steadfast in their hope. As we continue to navigate this season of turmoil, in what areas of your life can we as a group urge you towards the training and instruction of our heavenly Father? What are some specific ways that we can help you stay rooted in your relationship with God?

Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank our Heavenly Father for revealing Himself to us in the person of Jesus! Ask that the Holy Spirit to continue to encourage us in our faith, to comfort us in His love, and to push us closer and closer to our Father in heaven. Finally, pray that we as a church would seek to unify as the image bearers of our Heavenly Father so that we could become a place of refuge for those who are on edge during this cultural moment!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Further Reading and Exploration: *Read 1 Thessalonians* The key text this week comes from the book of 1 Thessalonians. In most of Paul's letters, the lengthy and sometimes garbled introduction sets the stage for the entire letter by introducing several key themes for you, the reader, to follow. Walk through Chapter 1 extremely carefully picking out themes, writing them down, and tracing Paul's logical flow so that you might be able to follow those themes throughout the rest of the book!

-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to 3Crosses.org/coronavirus. If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at 3Crosses.org/neighborhood

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that the members of your group would unite under our heavenly Father as His image bearers! Seek to encourage them, comfort them, and urge them towards the scriptures this week!